

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00  
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SSM-03 /139 W

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O R 241600Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7730

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2305

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLO, LE, PINS, PINT

SUBJ: THE COMMITTEE OF THIRTEEN

1. SUMMARY: ON APRIL 23 AN AD HOC COMMITTEE OF 13 DEPUTIES REPRESENTING VARIOUS CONFESSIONAL GROUPS ADOPTED A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE "CESSATION OF PALESTINIAN AND ANY OTHER ARMED ACTION THROUGHOUT LEBANON'S TERRITORY." THE RESOLUTION MAY FACILITATE THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT. ALTHOUGH THE RESOLUTION MARKS AT LEAST A COSMETIC STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, WE ARE SKEPTICAL THAT ITS TERMS WILL BE TRANSFERRED FROM THE REALM OF GOOD INTENTIONS TO REALITY. EMD SUMMARY.

2. TERMS OF THE RESOLUTION.

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A. IN A MOVE HAILED BY L'ORIENT-LE JOUR AS A "BOMBSHELL EXPLODED IN POLITICAL CIRCLES THAT HAS CONSIDERABLE STRENGTHENED THE CLIMATE OF DETENTE," AN AD HOC PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OF 13 DEPUTIES REPRESENTING VARIOUS CONFESSIONAL GROUPS ON APRIL 23 ADOPTED A SIX-POINT RESOLUTION STATING:

B. "FIRST: THE NECESSITY OF APPLYING SECURITY COUNCIL RESO-

LUTION 425, WHICH STIPULATES: A) STRICT RESPECT FOR THE SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE OF LEBANESE TERRITORY; B) THE WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI FORCES FROM ALL OF LEBANESE TERRITORY; C) THE REESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE'S AUTHORITY IN THE REGION OF THE SOUTH.

C. "SECOND: CESSATION OF PALESTINIAN AND ANY OTHER ARMED ACTION OVER ALL OF LEBANON'S TERRITORY.

D. "THIRD: PROHIBITION OF ANY ARMED PRESENCE OTHER THAN THAT OF THE FORCES OF THE LEGITIMATE LEBANESE AUTHORITY, AND APPLICATION OF LEBANESE REGULATIONS AND LAWS TO ALL LEBANESE AND TO ALL PERSONS WHO ARE WITHIN LEBANESE TERRITORY WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

E. "FOURTH: CONSTRUCTION OF THE LEBANESE ARMY ON A NATIONAL, HEALTHY AND VIABLE BASIS.

F. "FIFTH: PURSUANCE OF A POLICY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A LIBERAL ECONOMIC REGIME IN CONFORMITY WITH A MODERN STRUCTURE BASED ON THE EXPLOITATION OF ALL THE NATIONAL RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY IN ORDER TO ASSURE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ALL CITIZENS AND IN ORDER TO REALIZE SOCIAL JUSTICE.

G. "SIXTH: ASK THE AUTHORITIES TO CARRY OUT THESE RESOLUTIONS."

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### 3. REACTIONS.

A. L'ORIENT-LE JOUR QUOTED INFORMED SOURCES AS SAYING PRESIDENT SARKIS "DID NOT HIDE HIS PROFOUND SATISFACTION AT THE RESULTS OF THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE." L'ORIENT-LE JOUR BELIEVED THE RESOLUTION WOULD FACILITATE THE FORMATION OF A NEW CABINET, AND THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD APPOINT A NEW PRIME MINISTER, PROBABLY SALIM AL-HOSS, BY APRIL 25. KAMAL AL-ASSAD, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE AND A PRIME MOVER OF THE COMMITTEE, CALLED THE MEETING "A NEW PAGE IN THE HISTORY OF LEBANON." SAEB SALAM SAID THE MEETING WAS A "HAPPY DAY" FOR LEBANON.

B. ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, HOWEVER, BACHIR GEMAYEL CLAIMED "WE HAVE TURNED OVER OUR HEAVY ARMAMENTS TO THE AUTHORITIES IN CONFORMITY WITH THE SHTAWARAH AGREEMENT, AND WE HAVE NO OTHER ARMS TO TURN OVER." (COMMENT: THIS IS SIMPLY UNTRUE. BACHIR TOLD US LAST WEEK, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT HE HAS FIVE TANKS.) ACCORDING TO RADIO ISRAEL, BACHIR ALSO SAID THE DOCUMENT WAS NOT WORTH THE PAPER IT WAS PRINTED ON.

C. THE PLO HAS NOT YET COMMENTED.

4. THE DEBATE.

A. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, ALMOST FOUR HOURS OF DISCUSSION PRECEDED ADOPTION OF THE DOCUMENT, MOST OF WHICH WAS CENTERED AROUND THE LANGUAGE ON THE PALESTINIANS. CAMILLE CHAMOUN WANTED THE RESOLUTION TO CALL FOR "SUPPRESSION" OF THE ARMED PALESTINIAN PRESENCE IN LEBANON, BUT SAEB SALAM WOULD NOT ACCEPT SUCH A FORMULA. DRUZE DEPUTY BAHIJ TAQI-AL-DIN PROPOSED INSTEAD "IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIYADH AND CAIRO SUMMIT RESOLUTIONS IN A WAY CONFIRMING TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS." NLP VICE PRESIDENT KAZIM AL-KHALIL OFFERED THE COMPROMISE WHICH WAS ADOPTED: "CESSATION OF ARMED PALESTINIAN ACTION."

B. POINT FIVE, ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO REALIZE SOCIAL JUSTICE,  
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IS A LONG-TIME SHIA DEMAND. IT WAS APPARENTLY INCLUDED AT THE EXPLICIT REQUEST OF SPEAKER KAMAL AL-ASSAD TO PREVENT CRITICISM FROM HIS SHIA POLITICAL RIVAL, THE IMAM MUSA SADR.

5. MEMBERSHIP.

A. THE COMMITTEE OF THIRTEEN WAS FORMED ON APRIL 20, THE DAY AFTER THE CABINET RESIGNATION, TO TRY TO WORK OUT DIFFERENCES AMONG LEBANON'S CONFESSIONAL GROUPS. ITS MEMBERS ARE: SPEAKER KAMAL AL-ASSAD (SHIA), FORMER PRIME MINISTER SAEB SALAM (SUNNI), NLP LEADER CAMILLE CHAMOUN (MARONITE), FORMER PRIME MINISTER RASHID SOLH (SUNNI), PHALANGE PARTY LEADER PIERRE GEMAYEL (MARONITE), MICHEL MA'LULI (GREEK ORTHODOX), BAHIJ TAQI-AL-DIN (DRUZE), HASAN RIFA'I (SUNNI), NASRI MA'LUF (GREEK CATHOLIC), KAZIM AL-KHALIL (SHIA), 'ADIL OSSEIRAN (SHIA), KHATCHIK BABIKIAN (ARMENIAN), AND AUGUST BAKHUS (MARONITE). THE COMMITTEE WAS FORMED FROM A LARGER GROUP OF 26 DEPUTIES WHO HAD MET ON APRIL 18 AND 20, AND WHO HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN CONSTITUTED TO DRAW UP PRINCIPLES GUIDING A SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON -THE PALESTINIAN FILE," WHICH HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN POSTPONED INDEFINITELY.

B. L'ORIENT-LE JOUR HAS POINTED OUT THAT THE COMMITTEE IS NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ENTIRE LEBANESE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. FORMER PRIME MINISTER RASHID KARAMI, ONE OF THE KEY SUNNI FIGURES, IS NOT A MEMBER. NOR IS ANYONE FROM THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT (NM), THE PLO'S CLOSEST LEBANESE ALLY, ALTHOUGH BAHIJ TAQI-AL-DIN IS A FRIEND OF WALID JUMBLATT AND BELONGS TO THE NATIONAL STRUGGLE FRONT, A PARLIAMENTARY BLOC CLOSE TO THE NM.

6. COMMENT: THE DEPUTIES' ABILITY TO CONCUR ON COMMON LANGUAGE ON THE PALESTINIANS AND OTHER MILITIA IS AT LEAST A COSMETIC STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. THE AGREEMENT OF THE SUNNI MEMBERS TO  
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REFER EXPLICITLY TO THE PALESTINIANS IS A VICTORY FOR THE LEBANESE  
FRONT. THE CALL FOR THE PROHIBITION ON ALL MILITIAS, IMPLICITLY  
INCLUDING THOSE OF THE CHRISTIANS, ADD BALANCE. WE ARE SKEPTICAL,  
HOWEVER, THAT THE TERMS OF THE RESOLUTION WILL BE TRANSFERRED FROM  
THE REALM OF GOOD INTENTIONS TO REALITY. THE RESOLUTION DOES  
NEVERTHELESS ADD TO THE DRIVE, PARTICULARLY STRONG IN PARLIAMENTARY  
CIRCLES, FOR AN ALL-POLITICAL CABINET. END COMMENT. PARKER

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## Message Attributes

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